



### On location aboard *Voyager of the Seas*

Today's issue of *CW* is coming to you courtesy of Cruiseco, whose annual conference is this week.

*VOYAGER of the Seas* heads towards Hobart, with day two of the Cruiseco conference seeing formalities begin with an opening address from Chairman Kevin Dale.

Cruiseco's CEO Nic Cola will deliver a report on the state of the company, followed by several sessions from panelists and guest speakers.

Attendees will then enjoy drinks before they're free to dine at one of the many restaurants on board.

## Explorer Dream to return to Aus, NZ

**AS DREAM** Cruises' *Explorer Dream* wraps up her inaugural Australia and New Zealand season (*CW* 28 Oct 2019), the cruise line has revealed that she will return for a second season later this year.

The 1,856-capacity vessel (**pictured**) is due to return in Oct through to Feb 2021, to offer new itineraries such as Singapore to Fremantle via Broome and Exmouth, with the option to cruise on to Sydney via Adelaide and Melbourne.

*Explorer Dream* will then sail to Auckland, where she will be homeported during Nov and Dec for a series of seven-night itineraries around New Zealand, and a South Pacific cruise visiting New Caledonia.

In Jan 2021, the ship will return to Sydney to offer a selection of seven-night Tasmania round-trips, visiting ports like Port Arthur,



Hobart, Burnie, Eden, Phillip Island and Melbourne, before the vessel departs local waters at the end of Feb.

"The feedback we've received from passengers has been overwhelmingly positive and the local market has really embraced the Dream Cruises experience," said VP Sales and Marketing Australia Brigita Devries.

New season fares start from

A\$611 per person for a seven-night cruise from Sydney to Auckland, departing 01 Nov 2020 and calling into Picton, Marlborough Sounds, Gisborne, Tauranga, and Bay of Islands.

### Cruise Weekly today

**Cruise Weekly** today features three pages of all the latest cruise industry news.



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## Westerdam pax

**HOLLAND** America Line (HAL) has confirmed that the 781 remaining passengers aboard *Westerdam*, which is currently docked in Cambodia, have tested negative for COVID-19 and will begin to make their way home.

The pax were being held as a result of a passenger who tested positive to the virus after disembarking in Malaysia, despite having showed a negative result in initial testing carried out on the ship (**CW** 17 Feb).

The cruise line said the vessel will remain in Sihanoukville, Cambodia "for at least a few more days" until the 747 crew members have been tested for the virus.

A full team is on the ground in both Sihanoukville and Phnom Penh, including HAL President Orlando Ashford.

## Viking triple value

**VIKING** is offering Australian and New Zealand travel agents the chance to earn triple Rewards by Viking points on top of their usual commission until 31 Mar.

The offer applies to a number of itineraries in the Explorer Sale catalogue, including the 12-day Pharaohs and Pyramids Egypt river cruise tour.

**CLICK HERE** for more details.

## Elizabeth extended



**CUNARD** has revealed that it will extend *Queen Elizabeth's* (pictured) current cruise season in Australia and New Zealand by 60 days, with six new itineraries and 29 more port visits.

Among the new sailings is the ship's first-ever 27-night full circumnavigation of Australia, which will call into Sydney, Brisbane, Airlie Beach, Cairns, Darwin, Fremantle, Adelaide, Kangaroo Island and Melbourne between 12 Apr and 07 May.

The 2,000-passenger vessel will also offer two six-night Tasmania itineraries, including stops at Eden and Port Arthur, and two 11-night New Zealand voyages, which will visit Wellington, Tauranga, Auckland and the Bay of Islands.

Wrapping up the season on 09 May, *Queen Elizabeth* will begin a 24-night Trans-Pacific crossing

from Sydney to Vancouver via New Caledonia, Hawaii (Honolulu and Maui), Los Angeles and San Francisco before beginning the 2020 Alaska program.

Cunard Australia and New Zealand Commercial Director Katrina McAlpine said the decision to extend the luxury vessel's season Down Under was "a result of the current uncertainty due to travel restrictions and port closures in Asia and their effect on cruise operations in the region".

Cunard said it has offered guests who were booked on *Queen Elizabeth's* cancelled Asia and Japan itineraries full refunds as well as "special incentives to book a new voyage".

The new itineraries for the Australian and New Zealand season will go on sale on tomorrow at 9am at [cunard.com](http://cunard.com).

## Arctic info sesh

**ADVENTURE** Canada will host free Arctic expedition info events in Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney for travellers and travel agents on 24, 25 and 26 Mar, respectively.

For more info, **CLICK HERE**.



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## Ignite raises 25K

**IGNITE** Travel Group has raised a \$25,000 donation for global charity Mercy Ships, which operates hospital ships in third-world countries.

The donation, raised through a company-wide fundraising campaign driven through My Cruises, was presented at the CLIA Awards on Sat.

## SeaDream's Oz growth



**SEADREAM** Yacht Club is seeing 30% growth in the Australian market this year when compared to last, Vice President International Sales Jannicke Daae Rognstad (pictured) has told *Cruise Weekly*.

In Australia from head office in Norway to visit the cruise line's partners and travel agencies, and ahead of the announcement of a new ship later in the year, Rognstad hailed the Aussie market, and the impressive repeat rate of customers overall.

"We look at Australia as an important market," she said.

"It's a combination of a growth

market and a market that's been very strong for us in the Mediterranean, and we're now beginning to see an increase to the West Indies.

"Australians love to have long travel, and it's a very high repeat rate, so once we get Australians on board they bring friends.

"[Repeat rates] are around 60%...the Mediterranean is around 10% Australians, but we really see the West Indies and Caribbean as really important markets...they're growing, we like to educate more, and maybe if they have a US vacation, they can combine it".

## Paul Kelly at sea

**CHIMU** Adventures' Mar 2021 Antarctica expedition cruise, with special guest singer-songwriter Paul Kelly, will raise funds for Groundswell Giving and World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF).

The 21-day Songs in the South with Paul Kelly voyage will depart 11 Mar aboard the *Ocean Endeavour* with less than 200 passengers, heading to Antarctica, South Georgia and the Falkland Islands.

Kelly will perform three times during the cruise, and "shares many of Chimu's views about the environment and climate change," Chimu Adventure co-founder Chad Carey said.

In light of this, a percentage of the berth sales from the voyage will be donated to the two environmental charities.



**YOU'VE** heard of messages-in-a-bottle and long-lost treasures washing up on the beach, but how about a mixtape from the early nineties?

Stella Wedell was 12 years old when she lost her homemade cassette tape on a beach while holidaying in Spain, only to find it again 25 years later in an art exhibition in Stockholm, Scandinavia.

The tape, featuring bangers from the likes of Shaggy, UB40 and the Pet Shop Boys, washed up some 2,000 kilometres away in the Canary Islands in 2017.

The tape, which remarkably still worked, was discovered by artist Mandy Barker from Leeds, who included the cassette, as well as a full track listing, in her exhibition *Sea Of Artefacts*.

Wedell was able to identify the mixtape after recognising her specially-curated tracklist.

The tape will continue touring as part of the exhibition, before being returned to Stella.

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## P&O kids go free

**P&O** Cruises has announced a new seven-day Kids Cruise Free sale on school holiday cruises departing Jul 2021 to Jan 2022.

For guests who book any two adult fares before 25 Feb, the third and fourth guest will travel in the room for free.

Included in the sale are six seven- to nine-night cruises and a four-night sailing from Brisbane to the Whitsunday Islands on P&O's newest ship, *Pacific Encounter*.

Other destinations include New Caledonia, Tasmania, the South Pacific Islands and NZ.

For T&Cs, [CLICK HERE](#).